

Secondly, the article states, "In February, 1948, there was another hearing, this one on anti-Communist legislation which would bar Reds from teaching in Massachusetts. Along with the President of Harvard, Killian testified in opposition."

Dr. Killian appeared before the Joint Committee on Education at a hearing on the Barnes Bill, Document H220, on February 9, 1948. Dr. James B. Conant, President of Harvard University, and the heads of other major educational institutions in Massachusetts also appeared in opposition to the bill. Dr. Killian's full statement is as follows:

"I am speaking in behalf of the President and Corporation of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and in his absence I wish particularly to record the opposition of President Karl T. Compton to Document H220.

"In my judgment, the most important objections to the Barnes Bill arise from its serious violation of the civil liberties which are fundamental to the American system. I wish in this statement, however, to direct my remarks to the impossible burden it would place upon the administrative officers of Massachusetts educational institutions.

"The bill says in effect that the responsible officer of an educational institution should be a person so omniscient that he must be able (1) to tell a communist when he sees one, or (2) be prepared at any time to determine what the doctrines of the communist party may be on that particular day and to determine whether any member of the staff of his institution, orally or in writing, has advocated any of these doctrines.

"I submit, gentlemen, that this is not only impossible but dangerous.

"It is, I believe, an established fact that members of the communist party are perfectly willing at times to deny their membership and in other ways to hide their affiliation. If the prospective employee is really a communist, the chances are that the administrator would be unable either by investigation or by point-blank question to establish the fact. If the man is not a communist, he might justifiably feel that this inquisition is an indefensible invasion of his civil rights and refuse to consider a post at the institution.

"How can a college administrator or his board of trustees identify a communist or a member of the communist party when the U.S. Government, with

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all its far-flung agencies and resources for investigation, has been unable to establish the membership or non-membership of certain well-known public figures? In the institution which I serve, we employ, including part-time student assistants, about 1,000 new people a year. Investigation of each of these persons as required by this bill would be an almost impossible task.

"The bill would require the educational administrator to be able at all times to state the doctrines of the communist party. You are asking him, assuming that he could find out what these doctrines are, to refuse to employ a professor, a part-time student, or a janitor who advocates any of these doctrines, whether they be good or bad. I am certain it can be demonstrated that there are some doctrines of the communist party which are in accord with American ideals. I refer to communist support of the United Nations. Under this bill approval by a teacher of the program of the United Nations might legally be considered evidence of communist sympathy. The college administrator, however, would have no power under the bill to ~~distinguish~~ distinguish between the good and the bad doctrines. By the same token the employee of the educational institution could never be sure whether he was supporting, orally or in writing, a doctrine of the communist party.

"Educational administrators under the law would have to refuse to employ persons or would have to discharge persons on account of mere suspicion or uncertainty, since they never could be certain. The result would be that these administrators would have the principal responsibility for the enforcement of a criminal statute and, with wholly inadequate evidence to guide them, would have to perform a function that is proper only for the state itself to undertake.

"These are some of the impossible duties which the bill would require of administrators. There are other reasons why the bill would be harmful. It says that teachers and mechanics and maintenance employees and all others employed by an educational institution are subject to certain limitations in their employment which are not applicable to similar employees in other organizations. The institution which I serve employs about 3,500 persons. Only one-third of these are engaged in teaching. The other two-thirds are carpenters, mechanics, janitors, stenographers, plumbers, doctors, nurses, librarians, electricians, and many other kinds of people whose work is no different professionally from similar employment in very many other types of institutions. Why should this bill be directed at them and not at others in the same craft and profession?

"Finally, even if this bill could be enforced and even if it did not ask for an impossible performance from educational administrators, it would lay our colleges and universities open to a very serious weakness, namely, to the impossibility of giving our students any real understanding

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of what communism is (assuming that even the teachers themselves are able to find this out). It is one of the first principles of warfare that you must "know your enemy". To operate intelligently against or in competition with communism, at least some of our educated people must know something about what communism really is. This does not mean at all that we should teach communism in our schools, but it does mean that we are very lacking in vision and foresight and undermining our strength if we should establish a situation in which it would be practically impossible for our students to learn anything about communism. If the Barnes Bill is passed, it would be extremely difficult for any teacher in this Commonwealth ever to tell any of his students anything about communism or to assign them any reading material other than that which is purely propaganda against communism. Otherwise this teacher and his employer could easily be subject to the charge of 'advocating communistic doctrine' by persons who did not really understand what the teacher was trying to do.

"As the administrative officer of an educational institution, I certainly would not support the employment of any teacher who advocated the overthrow of our government or any other unconstitutional act, but I am absolutely certain that this Barnes Bill, if it becomes a law, will very seriously weaken the strength and the value to our society of our institutions of higher education. We seek no franchise for the propaganda of subversive doctrines, but we do insist that we must have the right of free inquiry, free study, free analysis of scientific and social matters, without being encumbered by the suspicion and fear that any one of our associates may some time make some statement which some one will interpret as subversive doctrine under the Barnes Bill, or else we shall lose our vitality and our ability to help train vigorous, wholesome young Americans to meet their democratic responsibilities.

"The Barnes Bill could create in our educational institutions an atmosphere of fear and suppression such as that which accompanied the Gestapo or the OGPU and this would be far more detrimental to our society and to the education of its youth than would the occasional subversive element which might creep into our organization under present conditions.

"To summarize, therefore, I base my opposition to the Barnes Bill on the ground that it is practically unworkable and that an effort to make it work would produce results far more damaging than those which it attempts to cure."